

# The Ragged Irregular



322nd SQDN

Vol. 23 No. 3



323rd SQDN



SUPPORTING UNITS  
91st Bombardment Group (H) Newsletter



324th SQDN



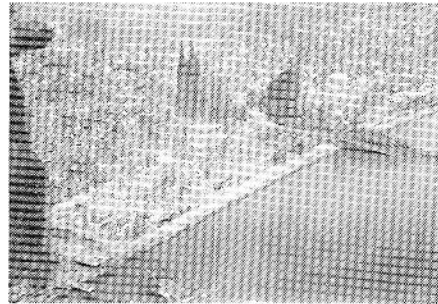
401st SQDN

July, 1990

## 91st WAR FORMATION PHOTOS SET FOR SEATTLE SALE

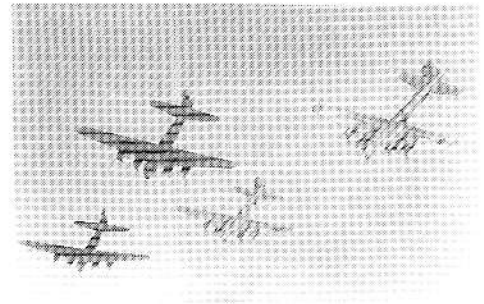


SQ AND PLANE IDENTIFICATION LETTERS are discernable on the silver 401st Forts in this 1944 formation photo. "20-20" vision plus magnification might identify the camouflaged planes on enlargements. SHOO SHOO BABY is the uppermost plane in the



left photo.

The ruins of Cologne, Germany, immediately after the cessation of hostilities, were part of a flight tour given 91st BG(H) Ground



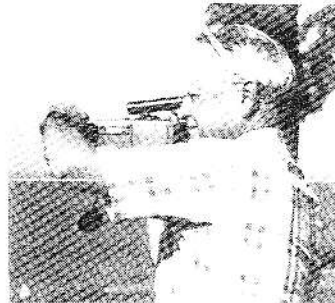
Crews (center photo).

Another wartime 401st formation "snapshot" taken by former 401st pilot Allan N Morey, NY; John J Hohman, MD; Paul L Chryst, PA and John S Askins, Jr, CA and scheduled for sale at the Seattle, WA Convention, is on the right.

THOSE INTERESTED IN ADDING EXCELLENT PHOTOS to their 91st BG(H) wartime collections are deeply indebted to B/Gen James H McPartlin (Ret), TX; Allan N Morey, NY; John J Hohman, MD; Paul L Chryst, PA and John S Askins, Jr, CA.

Interest in the above photos will be tested at the Aug 22-26, 1990 91st BGMA Seattle, WA 15th National Biennial Convention. A limited number of each will be available for purchase. Approximately half the purchase price will be deposited in the 91st BGMA General Fund.

The photos, like Lt C Carlton Brechler's manuscript-



JOHN S ASKINS, JR -  
Photo - History helper.

book, "WRAY'S RAGGED IRREGULARS", announced in the April 1990 R/I, caught the attention of numerous 91sters over the years. Finally one member volunteered considerable time, effort and skill to make them available to the membership.

Former 401st pilot John S Askins, Jr, CA, like Michael C Rheam who made Brechler's manuscript-book available, deserves grateful and generous applause for his contribution to the 91st BGMA.

The fact that the use of a portion of one of the negatives in past R/I's stirred differing, unresolved recollections regarding their exposure date accounts for their non-use recently.

The photo stirring the differing data supported memories is unique. It could be one of the few pictures taken of SHOO SHOO BABY in formation during WWII. (SSB is

(Continued on Page 2)

## FINAL CONVENTION NOTES

DETAILS OF THE NEARING AUGUST 22-26, 1990 91st BGMA Seattle, WA 15th National Biennial Convention are comprehensively covered in the brochures prepared by the Convention Committee. The brochures are available to all 91st BGMAers. Simply contact Charles R Hackstock, 14224 SE 288th St, Kent, WA 98042. Phone: (206) 631-3978.

**NOTE: Aug 1, 1990 is the deadline for hotel reservations. After Aug 1st rooms will be available on "space availability" only.**

**Aug 10th is the deadline for reservations for scheduled Convention activities - tours, etc. After Aug 10th reservations for such activities will require two dollars more per each reservation.**

Reports from Seattle indicate there are "high hopes" concerning the attendance level.

Plans now also include two new little endeavors to encourage active participation by those attending.

Though details have not been completed an effort will be made to acknowledge the contributions of former Groundcrew members and recognize and honor those attending the Convention.

Also members attending are invited to bring along any extra or unwanted snapshots of past reunions for donation to a Fund Raising effort. The R/I will be donating snaps from such recent 91st BGMA activities as SHOO SHOO BABY's Dover, DE "Roll Out Ceremonies," the Chicago Convention and the "Royston Return."

These photos will be placed in available cardboard boxes for examination by all. Anyone wishing to take any of these photos (one or many) for his own collection will be free to do so.

(Continued on Page 3)

## THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY TONY MONTALVO

DO IT NOW!

I'M SURE ALL OF YOU NOTED THE LATENESS OF the regular April 1990 R/I. For that you have my sincere apology.

It should be noted, however, that a "Special Edition" R/I reached everyone in April. That six page issue was given priority so that the membership would receive the 1990 Seattle Convention Voting Ballot and proposed By-Law Amendment changes in plenty of time to vote. That "Special Edition" also contained the necessary information required for obtaining Convention brochures. Just in case anyone mis-laid that info I repeat it.

"To obtain a 1990 Seattle Convention brochure write or call 91st BGMA Sec Charles R Hackstock. Address: 14224 Southeast 288th St, Kent, WA 98042. Tele: (206) 631-3978."

If you wish to attend the Convention do the above NOW!

So, the lateness of the regular April R/I was vexing - but we got the pertinent information out in plenty of time. Regarding this matter, a suggestion from the editor should be considered.

Instead of January, April, July and October issues the R/I could be scheduled for Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. This would ease arbitrarily set dead-line pressures which really often have all 91st BGMA officials scrambling.

Pertinent, dead-line news would, of course, hasten production and delivery. I'm tempted to agree with the pressure reducing suggestion and invite input on it from the membership at the Convention - and later.

The Seattle Convention program will include an effort to honor and recognize former Groundcrew members. If you are one of them make yourself known. I'm betting the spirit of the effort will prompt numerous "fly-boys" to buy a drink or two for someone who kept them flying!

Though I know it's impossible to expect all 91st BGMA-ers to attend I hope a lot of you do. I'll be there with my good Lady and a handsome grandson - a potential future Groundcrew or Aircrew member. As far as I'm concerned it'll be the biggest "family reunion" they've ever attended. Those signing up for the Vancouver pre-reunion activity increase their opportunities to socialize and have a real "picnic."

So, once more, if you haven't sent in for your Aug 22-26, Seattle Convention reservations yet, I can only say, Please DO IT NOW.

## FORMATION PHOTOS

(Continued from Page 1)

the uppermost plane in the picture.)

The R/I plans publication of the conflicting data in a future issue and will welcome membership input on the topic in subsequent editions. This article, meanwhile, is only concerned with the taking, survival and availability of these photos at Seattle, WA.

B/Gen MacPartlin, then 401st CO, started it all. He flew a mission as co-pilot with John D Davis' crew. Macpar-

lin's presence bumped Davis' then-co-pilot, Allan N Morey into the tail position from which Morey reported on the formation. Morey took along a camera that day and took some beautiful pictures.

Probably over 30 years later, long before the present editor was more than an "on-and-off again" 91st BGMA-er, he visited the Morey's in Syracuse, NY. (Allan and Betty Morey probably saved him from starvation while he attended Syracuse U after WWII.) After their usual table tennis tournament, rummaging by Morey produced some wartime photos and negatives which had barely survived earlier cellar flooding. The editor, envisioning the restoration of his own darkroom, asked to borrow Morey's "formation negatives." Morey, feeling the war was "passe," gave the negatives to the present editor.

Though cherished, the precious negatives were "lost" by the destined R/I editor under heaps of other important papers for years. His appointment to the R/I editor's post by Paul L Chryst after the 1986 Miami, FL Reunion sparked a long and eventually successful search for the negatives. The negatives were subsequently sent to then-Pres Chryst for appraisal.

Chryst after studying the discernible Sq and plane identification letters, found SSB on a number of the pictures. The R/I placed the now historically important returned negatives in its "future reference" files.

Somewhat later the negatives were mentioned to long-time Associate Member John J Hohman, whose older brother William, was KIA while serving with the 100th BG(H). Hohman, a professional photographer, made numerous enlargements of Morey's negatives but, unfortunately, was unable to print enlargements of the complete negatives because they required an enlarger model he did not have.

One of Hohman's enlargements appears on page 1 of the recently published "SHOO SHOO BABY, A LUCKY LADY OF THE SKY", by George Merva and Dan Patterson, Justice Patterson Studios, 7609 Production Dr, Cincinnati, OH. Other segment enlargements featuring "SSB" by Hohman have appeared in past R/Is.

A thick packet of pictures received by the R/I after the "Royston Return" from Askins, correspondence from Askins' former Radio Operator, Roger W Armstrong, CA and the nearing Seattle Convention resolved the R/I's conflict regarding further publication of Morey's negatives before data pertaining to them is resolved.

Askins' excellent "Royston Return" photos and Armstrong's references to his former pilot's deep involvement in photography dictated Baltimore, MD - Sunnyvale, CA contacts. Askins reassured the editor his darkroom was capable of reproducing the complete, odd-sized Morey negatives and he'd print any authorized amount for sale at the Seattle, WA Convention.

Of the negatives eventually sent to Askins the three chosen for initial presentation to the membership appear greatly reduced in this R/I issue.

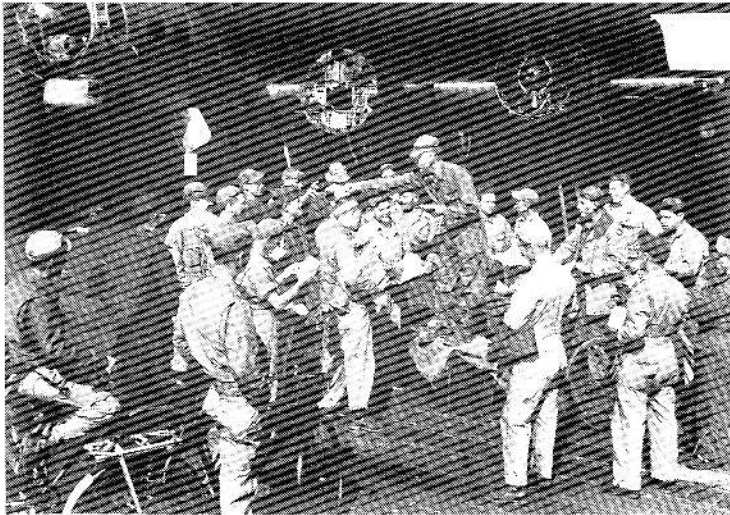
The data controversy? For now, suffice to say that one former 401ster recalls (with evidence) the "SSB" photo was taken on the Poznan, Poland raid. Another 401ster says it was taken on the April 1944 Oldenburg, Germany raid (with evidence).

It is hoped the readily readable Sq and plane identification letters on some of the pictured planes will help other

(Continued on Page 7)



## MAKING AND LOSING FRIENDS MARRED GROUND ASSIGNMENT



**GUNDERV BERG, 323rd S Q MAIL ORDERLY, STANDS TALLEST in this wartime Bassingbourn mail delivery photo. Berg is pleased that many 323ers still remember him when he appears at 91st BGMA reunions.**

A MAIL ORDERLY, GUNDER V BERG, 323rd, SAYS, WAS highly visible to hundreds of men at Bassingbourn during the war. And, though the job brought no glory, his assignment has proven a source of satisfying post-war recognition.

Whenever he appears at 91st BGMA reunions he says he is inevitably approached and asked if there is any mail for the 323rd!

A newswriter for 56 years, Berg, now 80, continues to write a weekly column for the Valley City Times-Record in ND. He plied his profession during his Bassingbourn time a bit by keeping a diary.

From that log he writes the Bassingbourn post office opened Oct 1, 1943 and Oct 2 was the first day of operation. The PO, near his mailroom in the 323rd's housing in Block E made it unnecessary for Sq mail orderlies to work in the evenings. Before that mail was brought from Wellingboro, a considerable distance.

The 91st's mail orderlies further served base personnel by purchasing money orders for them. The money entrusted was sometimes considerable. Many of the base "gamblers" purchased the money orders for themselves - then cashed them in when their luck changed. There were exceptions. At times individuals mailed home thousands of dollars by money order.

English weather often made the long trip to Wellingboro less than a joy ride. Severe colds were, at times, the price he paid. Billy Mitchell, Jacob Devours and Hyman Cohen are some of the other mail orderlies he recalls sharing the responsibilities with him.

The opening of the Bassingbourn PO permitted mail delivery to squadron mail rooms by bicycle. If loads were heavy the motor pool provided jeeps or trucks. Barney Hendrix and Marvin Rape, Berg recalls, were two of the motor pool drivers.

His Nov 1, 1943 diary records "16 bags of mail today." Nov 9, 1943 is described as "one of the busiest days, 19 bags of mail, many letters" and Nov 13th, 19 bags of packages arrived. Mail volume always rose during the Christmas seasons - then "normal" delivery sometimes meant

virtually none. That was always disappointing to everyone.

Because of the high visibility his assignment gave him he probably had more direct contact with more 323rd personnel than anyone. Names became associated with faces and friendships developed.

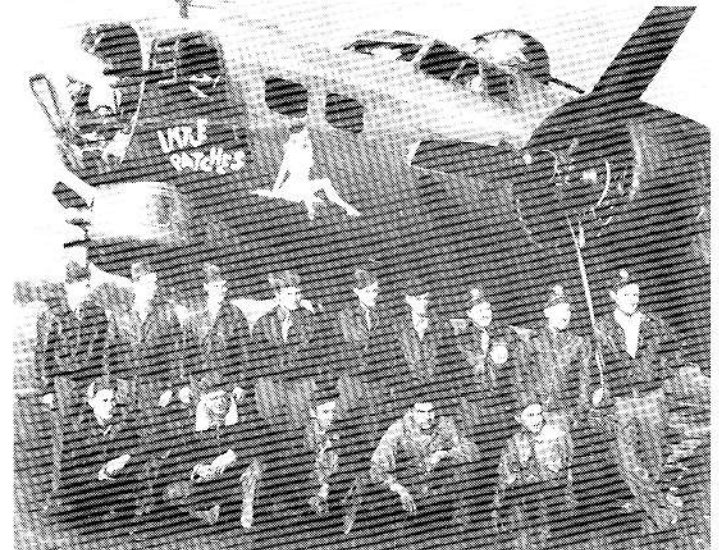
That was the good and bad part of his job, he says. Part of his job was withdrawing mail addressed to those MIA and returning it to the sender. Stamping "MIA" on hundreds of such letters was an unforgettable dreary task.

Another dreary assignment was the selling of perishables from the effects of MIA crews at the direction of Adjutant Butler. And another unpleasant part of his job was the delivery of "Dear John" letters.

Berg was in Hq & Hq Sq when the 91st formed at McDill Field, FL in May 1942. After the move to Walla Walla, WA he was transferred to the 323rd and worked with Lee L Clem of OK. Clem's assignment to 323rd CQ made Berg the official 323rd mail orderly - the job he retained till the war's end.

He recalls his Sept 4, 1942 embarkation from New York harbor. A ferry taking him and other 91sters to the QUEEN MARY passed the overturned French Liner, LAFAYETTE.

Berg's Bassingbourn assignment, like many others, lacked glory and glamour. The recognition he received then and still does now is ineradicable assurance that such service was and is always important and indispensable.



**REALLY RARE PHOTO! THIS PHOTO FROM HISTORIAN "Bud" Evers' files is unique for two reasons. They are: 1) Caption material accompanying it identifies most of the personnel and 2) Ground Crew members are included!**

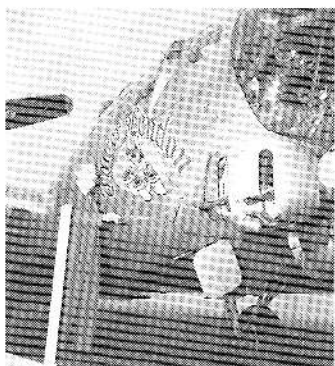
LITTLE PATCHES, the pictured 401st plane, had logged more than 50 missions at the time - more than enough for many Air Crewmen to safely complete their tours.

Air Crewmen, standing (L-R) are: B H Bova Cummings, BT; Charles A Van Loo, TG; Sam W Harris, RO; Edward L White, WG; Mark Weston, TT; George O Fredrickson, Bombardier; Paul A Henritzy, Navigator; Harold E Johnson, Co-Pilot and Charles N "Buck" Buchanan, Pilot.

Ground Crewmen, kneeling (L-R) are: Robert P Dalton; Ernest V Pry; George B Camp, Crew Chief; Charles D Mooneyham and "Clement" (first name unknown). John A Hassler, another Groundcrewman, is not pictured.

LITTLE PATCHES' luck ran out during the Mar 6, 1944

(Continued on Page 6)



**ONE INITIAL, UNSUCCESSFUL christening attempt! (Note unbroken bottle under turret.)**

## 323rd PLANE'S CHRISTENING POSED PROBLEMS IN 1945

BY COL. WILLIS J TAYLOR (RET)

IN THE SPRING OF 1945 A STAFF OFFICER AT PINE-tree (8th AF HQ) decided it was an appropriate time for a bit of public relations on behalf of our British friends.

At that time the 323rd Sq, which I was commanding, had just received a brand new B17 which created a minor problem. That beautiful, shiny new bird required a name.

The 323rd's creative minds were called upon to provide an appropriate, distinctive name. Our squadron already was the proud possessor of the famous NINE-O-NINE which had set and would retain the 8th AF record for consecutive missions without an abort. And the 91st plane

roster was replete with names of pretty girls whose illustrated lovely forms adorned the planes' noses. Imaginative efforts in that area seemed almost exhausted. (Two of the planes bearing such popular monikers would survive the war and peace - they were the MEMPHIS BELLE and SHOO SHOO BABY.)

Fate, however, in the form of the high command "PR" decision, hastened the naming of our new plane. It was decided that the "PR" program to honor our British friends would be hosted by the 323rd. Col Henry W Terry, 91st BG(H) CO, relayed the message and said Their Excellencies The Lord Mayor and The Lord High Sheriff of London would attend the christening of our new plane.

The creative minds of the 323rd then abandoned all thoughts of another tribute to the fair sex and concentrated on a name suitable to the occasion.

We probably could not have done worse than our final decision. (Had we read or studied English history with any sensitivity we'd have looked further. The historical site after which we named the plane is, unfortunately, not generally associated with one of England's past "finest hours.")

We named our new, shiny plane TOWER OF LONDON.

Our guests, however, were gracious and events on the day of their tour progressed smoothly - until the christen-



**THE TOWER OF LONDON'S bombay is being explained to the Lord Mayor of London.**

ing. The champagne bottle to be used was said to contain water from the Thames. (Our Sq Exec, Major Ed Butler, was a very resourceful fellow.)

The bottle, suspended from the co-pilot's yoke, was seized by The Lord Mayor during "the great event" and, with due ceremony, struck against TOWER OF LONDON'S nose. The Lord Mayor may have put a dent in her shiny, new nose - but he didn't break the bottle.

He tried again with the same negative result. As he stood there, perplexed, it is not impossible he thought of other Englishmen who had experienced historically recorded discomfort with the real Tower of London in the past.

Fortunately someone had the presence of mind to instruct his Lordship to do what had to be done on one of the .50 cal machine guns in the nose turret.

That worked.

After the christening we proudly showed our guests some of the workings of the aircraft. We had dignitaries of our own there - B/Gen Gross, CG 1st Combat Wing; Col Terry; Major Charley "Combat" Hudson; Major Tommy Thompson and - how I wish I could recall the names of all the great people there - including the Ground Crews who kept us flying!

TOWER OF LONDON went on to fly several missions. In fact, I flew the last mission of my tour in her on April 16, 1945. At deployment time, however, we chose our first love, NINE-O-NINE, to fly back home with our OPs Officer, then Major Bill Reid.

## "TREMENDOUS RESPONSE" STIRRED

(Continued from Page 8)

an audience of over 300,000, the best-attended in Britain. Air-Fete '92 will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the USAAF's arrival in England.

### 24/25 May 1992

Southend Airshow, A family day out with a flying display especially themed for 1992.

### 1st or 2nd Sunday in June 1992

Air Show at RAF Swanton Morley

### July 1992 (provisional)

Glenn Miller style concert at Parham airfield

### 3-5th July 1992

Extravaganza at Blickling Hall, the East Anglian Regional Office of the National Trust.

(Continued on Page 6)



**A "MAE WEST" EXPLANATION WAS PART OF THE "TOWER OF London" christening ceremonies. L-R, those whose faces appear are: An unidentified RAF Officer; Maj Willis J Taylor, 323rd CO; the Lord Mayor of London; Col Henry W Terry, 91st BG(H) CO; Maj Tommy Thompson, Gp Ops and a bit of the profile of the Lord High Sheriff of London.**



## "SSB" MUST SHARE "ONE PLANE" FAME

COL PAUL G McDUFFEE, right, first SHOO SHOO BABY pilot, wrote this article. (He always wanted all 91st records kept "straight.")



BY PAUL G McDUFFEE

IT WAS VERY EARLY AM, APRIL 9, 1944 IN ENGLAND when the Alert Orderly performed his hated "wakey-wakey" assignment. Following morning ablutions and breakfast, airmen of the 91st BG(H) collected in the Briefing Room. The target, indicated by a tautly stretched, long red string, was deep in the heart of Germany. The weather looked lousy; in fact, with little imagination, it could have been termed "socked-in." However, no cancellation was announced. Shortly, the 91st took off and began climbing to assembly altitude, which was supposed to be CAVU. Piloting Shoo Shoo Baby, I encountered a very shallow break in the overcast. Almost immediately thereafter the top layer of the overcast was encountered. Ascent through this was made on instruments. The gut-fear of mid-air collision must have been with every 91st crew aloft at that time.

Finally, after many minutes of blind climbing, A/C 42-32076, Shoo Shoo Baby, broke through the overcast at some 36,000 feet, an incredible feat in itself, considering the bomb load, topped off fuel tanks, ammunition and everything else. While breaking through the overcast, SSB barely missed collision with the tail end of a group of B-24's flying on top of the overcast on a 90° course. The turbulence caused by that formation buffeted SSB brutally.

After her close encounter with calamity she found herself alone in clear skies providing unlimited visibility. No other aircraft was in sight. The search for friends finally found flecks upon the horizon, SSB headed for them.

The formation proved to be a badly organized group of B17s. SSB joined it, grateful for the company. Continuing with this group as #3 plane in its leading element, she helped bomb the target, Marienburg, Germany, down some 180° below Danzig and Gdynia on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea.

Flak and fighter descriptions are irrelevant in this account. The important thing is a Mission was completed.

SSB detached herself from the group she had accompanied about two-thirds of the way back across the North Sea. Flying directly to Bassingbourn, she landed and, after taxiing to her dispersal point, was found to be completely devoid of gas.

The welcoming committee awaiting her perplexed her crew until Col. Claude Putnam explained that the 91st BG(H) would be credited with a mission as a result of her one plane participation in the Marienburg raid. (The 91st had been recalled from the raid due to heavy overcast but SSB had never received the message.) For sometime fanfare and congratulations flowed like whiskey at an Irish wake. Things soon returned to normal.

No mention was made during the festivities that one of the 91st's planes had not yet returned. Long after SSB's welcome was over that plane, piloted by the 323rd's Fred Gardner, returned after dark, virtually unnoticed.

Years after the war this writer heard rumors that another 91st plane also completed the Marienburg raid. Sketchy records available to him were not helpful. Recently, singular and extraordinary efforts by our meticulous Historian, Hiliary "Bud" Evers, unearthed further information in the archives at Maxwell Field, the home of the USAF Historical Research Organization. Receiving the new data last April, 45 years later, I phone Fred Gardner.

Fred confirms that he and his crew also completed the Marienburg mission. After some prodding he explained he hadn't pressed for recognition for sharing SSB's achievement because it wasn't "a big deal" for him and he did not wish to cloud the singular prestige and publicity given this writer and his crew. Fred has been properly chided for his diffidence.

From my phone conversation with Fred this is the story of SSB's 91st companion over Marienburg:

The recall message never reached Fred either. Eventually he attached himself to a group which he describes as "motley." No two identifications of Wing, Group or Squadron were alike. Since he never saw SSB and we never saw his plane, he probably flew with another formation.

During his return Fred's plane ran very, very low on gas while still over the North Sea. Abandoning their adopted formation, he descended to 2,000 feet while lightening his plane. At last, with sputtering engines and in waning light he landed at an RAF base called "Seething." I believe Fred said that the base was then occupied by B24s under the command of Col James Stewart.

After refueling, which took considerable time, Fred took off and returned to Bassingbourn in the dark. After taxiing to his dispersal area he and his crew shut up shop and headed for their barracks. The festivities regarding SSB's "lone" achievement were over - only the Control Tower operator knew about his late return. In the morning, it is certain, his achievement was "duly noted" - but without fanfare, festivity or thought of history.

This writer can only add he is deeply indebted to Historian Evers for the diligent research that has corrected the 91st BG(H)'s Marienburg, Germany raid record. Hopefully the future will provide the name of Fred Gardner's 323rd plane and the names of his crew members who have too long been silent regarding their equal part in a memorable day of 91st history.

If the April 9, 1944 Marienburg raid is to be remembered as a singular event in that history then Fred Gardner, his crew and their 323rd Sq plane must share the "prestige and publicity" that has been erroneously, thus far, so generously but solely showered upon SSB, my crew and myself.



## ATTENTION!

(Continued from Page 8)

The 114 page publication contains considerable 91st BG(H) copy and photos - many in full color. Space does not now permit review of this excellent publication. Those unable to find it on local magazine racks may write: Challenge Publications, Inc. 7950 Deering Av, Canoga Park, CA 91304

## Do You Remember?

*Through the history of world aviation  
many names have come to the fore...  
Great deeds of the past in our memory  
will last,  
as they're joined by more and more...*

*When man first started his labor  
in his quest to conquer the sky  
he was designer, mechanic and pilot,  
and he built a machine that would fly...  
but somehow the order got twisted,  
and then in the public eye  
the only man that could be seen  
was the man who knew how to fly...*

*The pilot was everyone's hero,  
he was brave, he was bold, he was grand,  
as he stood by his battered old biplane  
with his goggles and helmet in hand...  
to be sure, these pilots all earned it;  
to fly you have to have guts...  
And they blazed their names in the hall of fame on  
wings with bailing wire struts.*

*But for each of these flying heroes  
there were thousands of little reknown,  
and these were the men who worked on the planes  
but kept their feet on the ground...  
We all knew the name of Lindbergh,  
and we've read of his flight to fame...  
But think, if you can, of his maintenance man,  
can you remember his name?*

*And think of our wartime heroes,  
Gabreski, Jabara, and Scott...  
Can you tell me the names of their crew chiefs?*

*Now pilots are highly trained people,  
and wings are not easily won...  
But without the work of the maintenance man  
our pilots would march with a gun...  
So when you see mighty aircraft  
as they mark their way through the air,  
The grease stained man with the wrench in his hand  
is the man who put them there...*

**Author Anonymous**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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ROBERT M. SLANE, Shreveport, LA  
JOE A. TOTUSEK, Mesa, AZ

## FINAL CONVENTION NOTES

(Continued from Page 1)

A donation box will be nearby in which members may leave a donation for pictures for the 91st BGMA General Fund.

There will be no obligation for such donations and the amount of any donation will be left to the discretion of the members. It is assumed these snapshots of past affairs will be available at the Convention Hospitality room.

The recent 91st BGMA fund raising projects have been sparked by membership interest in the publication of a comprehensive 91st BG(H) history. Professional writers, it has become apparent, generally expect some payment before beginning such a project. A bit of "pushie" fund raising has, therefore, become SOP for awhile.

## "TREMENDOUS RESPONSE" STIRRED

(Continued from Page 4)

**5th July 1992**

Barbecue and Dance at Thorpe Abbots airfield, Norfolk.

**10th July 1992 (provisional)**

Commemorative Service at Norwich Cathedral.

**12th July 1992**

Classic Fighter Display at Duxford Airfield, with special emphasis on P-51 and P-47.

**18th July 1992**

Commemorative service at Chelmsford Cathedral.

**13th Sept 1992**

Duxford 92. Duxford's main air display with a historical 3 hour show.

**26th Nov 1992**

Thanksgiving Service at St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds.

## REALLY RARE PHOTO!

(Continued from Page 3)

Berlin raid. The 91st MACR 2898 states:

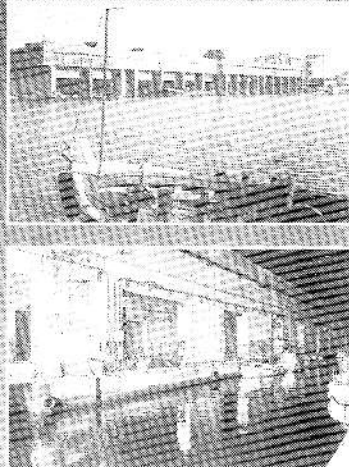
"Last sighted by Sgt Glen L Sandahl, 39544365. 12:42. 52.28N - 11:20E two FW190s from tail set #3 engine on fire. One FW hit A/C exploded and set A/C on fire which set 2nd FW on fire. 3 A/C went down together. A/C shot down one twin and two single engine E/A. Four chutes were seen."

Of Lt Bob Tibbetts' crew flying her that day only two survived, WG Dana E Morse and TG Walter J Davis. Those who lost their lives with Tibbett were: Alexander Ellerman, Leo T Sharum, Richard A Warheim, James W Brady, Robert E Kidder, Sydney A Baratt, Jr and Harold J Rhode.

The identification of all appearing on this photo is an example of the information sought for photos to be included in a Photo-History of the 91st BG(H) proposed by B/Gen Earl C Pate, Ret, TN, who is succeeding Evers as the 91st BGMA Historian.

## SON OF ONE OF FIRST 91st MIAs HONORS FATHER: MORE

La base sous-marine  
de SAINT-NAZAIRE



MAJ HAROLD C SMELSER, 324th and other 91sters KIA were piog-nantly honored by his son, Lawrence L Smelser, 47 years after their deaths. Pictured is the postcard he sent Historian Hiliary "Bud" Evers from St Nazaire, France. The English caption on the back says, "The submarine base, built during WWII, whose access lock now houses the submarine Espadon."

• THE FIRST CASUALTIES SUSTAINED BY THE 91ST BG(H) occurred during the Nov 11, 1942 St Nazaire, France raid. Of the five planes attempting to bomb on their own only three returned - one to a crash landing at Watford in which half its crew was killed.

SAD SACK, 323rd; PANDORA'S BOX AND A/C 4124506, 324th were the other casualties. All on SAD SACK and PANDORA'S BOX are listed as MIA.

Major Harold C Smelser, flying as co-pilot on PANDORA'S BOX, was among those who never returned.

Lawrence L Smelser, DC, Major Smelser's son and a 91st BGMA Associate Member, returned to St Nazaire, France on Nov 11, 1989 and placed a wreath on the water nearby in memoriam and honor of his father and all the other 91sters who died near there 47 years ago.

The MACR's pertaining to SAD SACK and PANDORA'S BOX are the same. They state: "Shot out of formation by E/A. Five planes tried to bomb on their own and failed. Only three made it back. No bombs dropped."

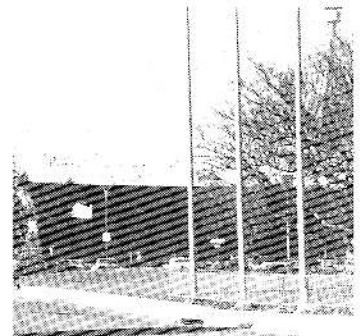
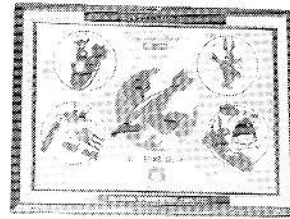
The MACR pertaining to A/C 4124506's Watford crash says "Major Smelser waved A/C on and they proceeded to base. Unable to land due to poor visibility. Landed at Watford, hit field pylon around 18:00 hours. Smelser A/C near brest (sic) over water at 2,000 ft with ball turret showing red when ordered on (sic)."

Major Smelser's son, Lawrence, is an avid collector of 91st anecdotes and history and frequently attends 91st BGMA functions with notebook in hand.

• ANOTHER 91ST BG(H) MEMORIAL HAS BEEN CALLED to the attention of the R/I. Former Sec W W Hill and his wife, Jacquelin, chanced upon it while touring CA last year and paying their respects to the QUEEN MARY, the British luxury liner which safely transported many 91st BGMAers during the war.

The QUEEN MARY, now a tourist attraction in Los Angeles, CA, contains a full color plaque displaying the 91st Gp and Sq insignias on a companion door along with other WWII displays.

Hill, who stumbled upon the tribute, says he is certain veteran 91st BGMA past official George W Parks, CA, presented it to the HMS QUEEN MARY.



A FULL COLOR MEMORIAL PLAQUE TRIBUTE TO THE 91st BG(H) on the former HMS QUEEN MARY, discovered by former Sec W W Hill, is on the left. The HMS QUEEN MARY, now a Los Angeles, CA tourist attraction, is on the right. (Photos - W W Hill)

## Folded Wings

• ANDERSON, HOMER (ANDY), 322nd, 3747 N Pacific Av, Chicago, IL 60634; Apr 29, 1990. Reported by his wife, M Anderson.

• DIETRICH, WILLIAM H, 323rd, 12708 Bexley Terrace, Silver Springs, MD 20904; Feb 15, 1990. Stricken with cancer, Dietrich (70) worked at the US Senate, Sgt at Arms Office, Wash, DC until the Senate's recession in Nov 1989. His wife, Ruth, reports she was unable to bury him at nearby Arlington Cemetary because he did not receive a Purple Heart during wartime service. Buried at the Quantico National Cemetary in VA, he is survived by four daughters and five grandchildren in addition to his widow.

• JACOBY, VINCE J, 401st, 1369 Penn Av, Scranton, PA 18509; Apr 8, 1990. Reported by the US Postal Service.

• SEVERSON, LEO R, 322nd, USAAF Home HFC, Washington, DC 20317; June 6, 1989. Reported by the US Postal Service.

• SPONSEL, ROBERT C, 322nd, POW, 2175 Southern #246, Apache Junction, AZ 85220; June 2, 1990. Sponsel, who retired in 1980, was a former Mayor of Sturgis, MI.

A member of 1/LT Thomas F Burne's crew, he lost one arm. when their plane, GAL OF MY DREAMS, was downed during the Nov 2, 1944 Merseburg, Germany raid. Five of his nine crewmates were KIA.

Reported by his family which is planning interment of his ashes with full military honors at the Arlington National Cemetary.

## FORMATION PHOTOS

(Continued from Page 2)

members determine or speculate on the date and the mission during which the photos were taken.

Askins' formation enlargements are 6 1/2 x 10" wide. The photo of Cologne, Germany immediately after WWII's end is 8 x 10" wide. The photos will be sold at the Convention for \$5.00 each; two for \$9.50 or all three for \$14.00. At this time mail order arrangements are still pending.



## "TREMENDOUS RESPONSE" STIRRED BY 50th USAAF ENGLISH REUNION



EAST ANGLIA  
1942-1992

"REUNION NEWS BULLETIN 2", the promotional paper of the East Anglia Tourist Board, Toppefield Hall, Hadleigh, Suffolk, IP7 5DN, England, reached the R/I. It is beautiful, informative and free to USAAF Vets!

"Reunion News" is successfully selling England's intent to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the USAAF's WWII arrival. 91st BGMA-ers are urged to write its' editor, Jane Sullivan (address above), for free, forthcoming, collectable copies.

### PUBS - BY ROGER FREEMAN

TO MOST YOUNG AMERICAN AIRMEN THE ENGLISH 'pub' appeared to be the main centre of social contact in the locality of their bases. Many who had never been into a bar in the States frequented pubs when off duty. These establishments provided relief from military life and an opportunity to mix with the natives, probably more than they were regarded as a source of alcoholic beverages. Indeed, many US servicemen found Bitter, Mild, Stout and the special brews quite unpalatable and complained about their warm nature, as most beers were served chilled in the States. However, perseverance saw many develop a taste for pub fare, be it 'half of Guinness' or 'a lemonade and a packet of crisps'. The weak wartime ales were soon found to be not all that weak and not a few aerial warriors found pleasant relief through 'a pint or two' in the Snug, Tap Room, Saloon, Lounge or one of the other drinking rooms in the average inn.

Some pubs became favourites and took on a distinctly American flavour and evidence of this can still be seen. Probably the most notable is *Lavenham Swan*, Suffolk, whose wartime landlord encouraged his visitors to leave their autographs on the walls of two bar rooms. An area of these inked and pencilled signatures has been preserved and includes a few famous names in 8th Air Force history.

To mark the affection US airmen had for the local pubs the vetrans' organisation, the 8th Air Force Historical

Society, has combined with British enthusiasts group, Friends of the Eighth, on a programme of picture presentations to favourite inns of the locality wartime bases. The picture usually takes the form of an enlarged photograph depicting an aircraft that flew from the nearby airfield. In some instances other wartime memorabilia is on display. One pub involved is not of pre-war origin but was established in recent years on the site of the old Rougham (Bury St Edmunds) airfield. It is named *The Flying Fortress* and the sign carries a painting of one of these bombers that once flew from the now abandoned airfield.

### EVENTS

#### 19th May 1992

Glenn Miller style concert at Westcliffe Theatre, Clanton-on-Sea, Essex, performed by the Nick Ross Orchestra and Singers.

#### 23/24 May (provisional date)

Air Fete '92 at RAF Mildenhall. Hosted by the United States Air Force, the annual Air Fete is the largest display organized by the military anywhere in the world and, with

(Continued on Page 4)

### ATTENTION!



#### National Warplane Museum

P.O. BOX 159  
GENESE, N.Y. 14454

• THE NORTHEAST'S LARGEST 1990 WARBIRD AIRshow is set for Saturday, Aug 18 and Sunday, Aug 19th at Geneseo, NY. The 10th Annual "Wings of Eagles" airshow, sponsored by the National Warplane Museum, P O Box 159, Geneseo, NY 14454 (Phone: 716-243-0690) will highlight four engine heavy bombers. The B17, B24 and the Avro Lancaster will be represented as well as over 125 other WWII aircraft.

The Upper NY State event has gained international recognition. Contacting the above address will provide detailed accomodation and ticket information. Parking is free.

• COLLESTER F RENTMEESTER (RET), 401st, FL sent the R/I a copy of a magazine format publication entitled, "SERENADE TO THE BIG BIRD: THE SAGA OF THE B-17 FLYING FORTRESS."

(Continued on Page 5)

### THE RAGGED IRREGULAR

These newsletters are published quarterly. October, January, April and July are the scheduled publication months. The R/I's purpose is to keep alive the spirit of the 91st Bombardment Group (H) and to maintain the fellowship of all those who fought together in World War II from AF Station 121 in Bassingbourn, England from 1942 to 1945.

Material for publication should be sent to the Editor, Rudy Malkin, 1643 Thetford Rd., Balto., Md. 21204. "Time Value" items must be received three weeks before the first day of the month of publication to permit necessary priority consideration for inclusion in that issue. Every effort will be made to utilize other submitted material in the scheduled or later R/I issue.

91st BG Memorial Assn.  
210 Leatherwood Dr.  
Mountain Home, AR 72653

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